

Department of Defense (DoD)
Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS)
Field Advisory Services - *FAS*
Classification Appeal Decision

DoD Decision:	High Voltage Electrician Supervisor, WS-2810-10
Initial classification:	High Voltage Electrician Supervisor, WS-2810-10
Organization:	Air Force Base Civil Engineering Squadron Facility Maintenance Branch
Date:	August 14, 1998

BACKGROUND

On June 22, 1998, the Defense Civilian Personnel Management Service, Field Advisory Services Division, accepted a job grading appeal from , who is currently classified as a High Voltage Electrician Supervisor, WS-2810-10. The appellant appealed the grade level of his job, requesting that his job be reclassified to High Voltage Electrician Supervisor, WS-2810-11.

This decision is the final administrative decision of the Department of Defense.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

- Information contained in appeal file submitted by the appellant
- Information contained in administrative report submitted by servicing personnel office
- On-site job audit with appellant
- Interview with appellant's first level supervisor

POSITION INFORMATION

The appellant is a supervisor in the Facility Maintenance Branch, Operations Flight,

Civil Engineering Squadron. As the head of the Electrical Section, the appellant exercises first level supervisory authority and responsibility over five civilian employees and two military trainees. The appellants subordinates include:

1 High Voltage Electrician, WG-2810-10

2 Electrician, WG-2805-10

1 Electronic Industrial Controls Mechanic, WG-2606-11

1 Power Support Systems Mechanic, WG-5378-10

2 Military (High Voltage Electrician trainees).

The appellant supervises the operations of the unit, the functions of which include the installation, modification, operation, maintenance, and repair of exterior and interior electrical systems, including high and low voltage electrical systems and generators which supply power to the installation. The installation houses a variety of facilities, including the Senior NCO Academy, several civilian schools, office buildings, family housing units, and a high security computer facility. In addition to the electrical systems, the appellant is also responsible for the maintenance and repair of the base electronically controlled fire alarm systems (worked on by the WG-2606-11). As the first level supervisor over the unit, the appellant exercises administrative and technical supervision over the subordinates, including planning weekly and monthly work schedules and setting priorities and deadlines, adjusting schedules as necessary, overseeing work operations, resolving work problems, determining materials/manpower requirements (making recommendations to supervisor), inspecting completed work for quality, approving leave for subordinates, recommending personnel actions, evaluating work performance, and resolving minor disciplinary and/or performance problems.

The appellant reports to a military supervisor who oversees the Facility Maintenance Branch.

STANDARD(S) REFERENCED

- Office of Personnel Management Job Grading Standard for Federal Wage System Supervisors
- Office of Personnel Management Job Grading Standard for High Voltage Electrician, 2810

PAY CATEGORY, SERIES AND TITLE DETERMINATION

The appellant is currently classified as a Wage Supervisor in the 2810, High Voltage

Electrician Series, and he does not disagree with this determination. The appellant's job involves the supervision of a mixture of trades work, including high voltage electrical work (2810), interior electrical work (2805 - installing, maintaining, repairing electrical wiring systems, fixtures, controls, and equipment), electronic industrial controls mechanical work (2606), and power support systems maintenance and repair work (5378). The appellant also has responsibility to provide on-the-job training to military members in the field of high voltage electrical work. As the first level supervisor for workers in each of these trades, the appellant is required to provide some degree of technical supervision in order to prioritize work assignments, plan the use of resources (manpower, materials, tools), and evaluate work performance. This requires the supervisor to be familiar with the methods, practices, and techniques of each of the trades supervised. According to the JGS for FWS Supervisors, the occupational series of the supervisor's job is based on the occupation which best reflects the overall nature of the work of the unit supervised and/or is the most important for recruitment, selection, placement, and other personnel purposes. In this case, the primary work function of the appellant's work unit is the installation, maintenance, and repair of electrical systems and equipment, and involves both 2810 and 2805 work. The work performed by the Power Support Systems Mechanic (maintenance and repair of generators) is secondary to the central function of the work unit. In addition, the Electronic Industrial Controls Mechanics (WG-2606) work involving the maintenance and repair of the fire alarm systems does not represent the primary function of the work unit. This work, although supervised by the appellant, is essentially a stand-alone function. The 2606 mechanic receives little or no technical direction from the appellant, and is expected to carry out the maintenance and repair work independently. It is the skill and knowledge of the high voltage electrical trade that represents the paramount knowledge requirement for the appellant's job. This is demonstrated by the considerable safety issues involved in high voltage work (requiring the appellant's constant attention), as well as the appellant's responsibility for training the military apprentices in the high voltage trade. Therefore, the appellant's job is properly allocated to the 2810 series. In accordance with the titling instructions in the job grading standard, the job is titled High Voltage Electrician Supervisor, WS-2810.

GRADE DETERMINATION

The grade will be determined using the Job Grading Standard for FWS Supervisors, which evaluates supervisory jobs based on three classification factors: 1. *Nature of Supervisory Responsibility*, 2. *Level of Work Supervised*, and 3. *Scope of Work Operations Supervised*. The appellant contends that the servicing personnel office has incorrectly credited his job under Factor 2 and Factor 3, Subfactor B. The appellant also believes that an upward grade adjustment is warranted, as provided for in the standard. This evaluation will focus on those factors in contention.

Factor 1. Nature of Supervisory Responsibility

The servicing personnel office credited "Situation 2" for this factor, and the appellant

does not disagree. Concur with local personnel office.

Situation 2 is credited.

Factor 2. Level of Work Supervised

The servicing personnel office determined that WG-10 was the appropriate level of work supervised. The appellant disagrees, and contends that WG-11 should be credited.

This factor evaluates the level and complexity of the work operations supervised, and their effect on the difficulty and responsibility of the supervisor's job, and is measured in terms of a grade level. Determining the appropriate level under this factor involves two steps: Step 1. Identify the occupation(s) directly involved in accomplishing the work assignments and projects which reflect the main purpose or mission of the work operations for which the supervisor is accountable; and Step 2. Determine the highest grade level of nonsupervisory work performed by subordinates in those occupations. The standard cautions that in making this determination, the grade level chosen must really reflect the level and complexity of the work operations supervised, and their effect on the difficulty and responsibility of the supervisor's job.

Step 1. The appellant supervises employees in four distinct occupational series (2810, 2805, 2606, and 5378). The main purpose of the organizational segment supervised is to install, maintain, and repair the electrical systems and equipment that provide power and electricity to the installation. The employees involved in this function work on exterior high voltage systems (2810), interior electrical systems and fixtures (2805), and diesel powered generators (5378). The highest level of nonsupervisory work performed by employees in these occupations is WG-10. The appellant also supervises an Electronic Industrial Controls Mechanic, WG-2606-11, who performs work on the electronically controlled fire alarm systems throughout the installation. This work represents a separate function for which the supervisor is accountable, and will be considered in determining the appropriate level for this factor.

Step 2. The highest level of nonsupervisory work performed by subordinates in the identified occupations, which accurately reflects the level and complexity of the work operations supervised by the appellant, is WG-10. Although the appellant is accountable for the work of the WG-2606-11 employee, that work is not representative of the actual complexity of the overall work operations. In crediting a grade level under this factor, the standard cautions against using a single job as the basis for the level assigned. In fact, it states that seldom, if ever, should a single job be used for the base level determination. The reason behind this cautionary note is that the work aspects of a single job rarely provide valid indicators as to the level and difficulty of the overall work operations supervised and their effect on the difficulty and responsibility of the supervisor's job. This is true in the appellant's case. The grade that best reflects the level and complexity of the overall work operations supervised by the appellant is

WG-10.

Factor 3. Scope of Work Operations Supervised

Subfactor A. Scope of Assigned Work Functions and Organizational Authority

The servicing personnel office credited level A-2 for this subfactor, and the appellant does not disagree. Concur with local evaluation.

Level A-2 is credited. 45 points

Subfactor B. Variety of Function

The servicing personnel assigned level B-3 for this factor. The appellant disagrees, asserting that level B-4 is the correct level.

This subfactor evaluates the difficulties of technical supervision of work functions which may vary from being essentially similar to markedly dissimilar. Similar or related work functions generally have a common or related body of knowledge, skills, procedures and tools. Supervision of dissimilar or unrelated work functions requires broader technical knowledge and planning and coordination skills than those required for supervision of similar work functions.

At level B-3, supervisors direct the work of subordinates in one or more similar or related occupations at grades 8-13. At level B-4, supervisors direct the work of subordinates in dissimilar or unrelated occupations at grades 8-13. In this case, the appellant supervises employees in the following occupations: 2805, 2810, 5378, and 2606. The variety of occupations supervised by the appellant meets level B-4. Although the 2805 and 2810 series are related occupations, the 2606 work involves a markedly different set of skills, knowledge, and trade practices. The same is true for the 5378 job, which requires knowledge of mechanical, hydraulic, and pneumatic components and systems, in addition to the electrical components of the generators. Note: the fact that the WG-2606-11 job was not credited for base level purposes in Factor 2 does not preclude crediting that work under this subfactor. The base level determination under Factor 2 measures the complexity of the overall work operations (in terms of a grade level), whereas this subfactor evaluates the variety of functions supervised and its impact on the supervisor's job. In this case, while the technical supervision exercised by the appellant over the Electronic Industrial Controls Mechanic may be somewhat limited, he still must be familiar with the methods, practices, and techniques of the trade in order to prioritize work, evaluate performance, and integrate that work into the overall operations of the unit.

Level B-4 is credited. 60 points

Subfactor C. Workforce Dispersion

The servicing personnel office credited level C-1 for this subfactor, and the appellant does not disagree. Concur with local evaluation.

Level C-1 is credited. 5 points

Summary of Factor 3

<i>Subfactor A.</i>	Level A-2	45 points
<i>Subfactor B.</i>	Level B-4	60 points
<i>Subfactor C.</i>	Level C-1	5 points

Total points: 110

Factor Level Assignment:**B**

Initial Grade Determination

Based on the grading tables found in the standard, the combination of Situation 2 (Factor 1); WG-10 (Factor 2); and Level B (Factor 3) results in an initial grade assignment of WS-10.

Grade Level Adjustment

The Job Grading Standard for Supervisors allows for grade level adjustments (upward or downward) under certain conditions. Nothing in the appellant's job warrants a downward grade adjustment. The appellant argues, however, that his job meets the conditions for an upward grade adjustment, based on the existence of "special or unusual demands" placed on him, specifically because of the dangerous nature of high voltage work, the responsibility for the fire alarm systems, and the responsibility to train military members in the high voltage electrical trade.

According to the standard, an upward grade adjustment is warranted for situations which impose special or unusual demands on the supervisor. Such demands would significantly affect the intensity of the supervisory effort and the level of both technical and administrative knowledge and skill which must be applied. The standard goes on to define such a work situation as one that has "special staffing requirements." These special requirements impose on the supervisor greater responsibility for job design, job engineering, work scheduling, training, counseling, motivating, and maintaining security than is normally encountered in orienting, training and supervising

subordinates. Examples include special employment programs (work-study, rehabilitation, etc.), which use employees with very low level skills and no work experience; or work situations at correctional institutions, which involve exceptionally difficult attitudinal, motivational, control and security problems. In order for an extra grade to be awarded, the special requirements must affect the responsibilities of the supervisor on a permanent and continuing basis; job assignments, work tasks, training, security measures and other supervisory actions must be tailored to fit these special circumstances for individual workers; and counseling and motivational activities must be regular and recurring, and are essential to the effective handling of the special work situation.

The appellant's job situation does not involve the special requirements that would warrant an upward grade adjustment. The appellant cites his responsibility for training military members in the high voltage electrical trade, and while this adds to the overall difficulty of the supervisory job, it does not approach the level of difficulty of the special staffing requirements described in the standard. First, the training responsibilities are limited to a small portion of the workforce, and are intermittent in nature. Also, training the military does not require the kind of counseling and motivational activities required for the upward grade adjustment, nor does the training impose significantly greater responsibility than would normally be encountered in training or orienting civilian employees.

The appellant also cites the special demands concerning the safety issues associated with high voltage work and fire alarm systems. The job grading standard, however, contains no provision for a grade level adjustment on the basis of safety related factors.

The appellant's job does not warrant an upward grade adjustment.

DECISION

The appellant's job is properly classified as High Voltage Electrician Supervisor, WS-2810-10.